

**Remarks/Arguments**

Applicant thanks Examiner Mandala for his patient and careful examination of this application and his clear explanation of the claim rejections. In response, applicant amends claim 7 to describe the invention more clearly and to overcome the rejection.

Claim 7, as amended, has additional limitations:

1. a first region in the insulating layer that extends through the thickness of the insulating layer;
2. the region being free of the insulating material; and
3. a conducting region within the first region and extending through the thickness of the insulating layer.

The US Patent 6,043,535 (the Houston patent) and the US Patent 6,759,315 (the Furukawa patent) do not disclose all the limitations in claim 7 as amended. In particular, the Houston patent does not disclose a corresponding first region that extends through the thickness of the insulating layer and it does not disclose a conductive region extending through the insulating layer. The element 126 in Fig. 6d in the Houston patent is indeed a conductive region. However, there is no corresponding region in the insulating layer 130 in the Houston patent that extends through the insulating layer that is free of the insulating material and the conductive region 126 also does not extend through the thickness of the insulating layer either. The secondary reference – the Furukawa patent fails to disclose such a region in the insulating layer and such a conductive region as required in claim 7 as well.

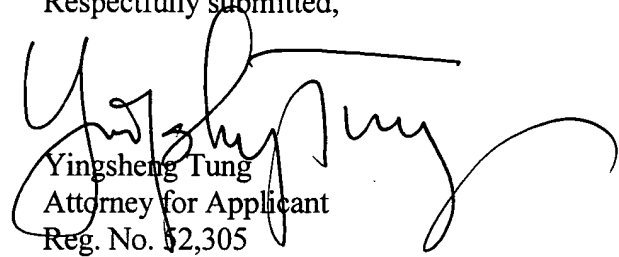
Because both references do not disclose all the elements of limitation in claim 7, they do not render claim 7 obvious and claim 7 stands patentable over the references. Claim 8-11 depend from patentable claim 7 and stand patentable at least by virtue of their dependency.

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In conclusion, applicant respectfully submits that this application is now in allowable form and all pending claims 7-11 distinguish over the cited references and stand patentable. Applicant respectfully request further examination of this application and timely allowance of all pending claims.

Texas Instruments Incorporated  
P. O. Box 655474 M/S 3999  
Dallas, Texas 75265  
(972) 917-5355

Respectfully submitted,

  
Yingsheng Tung  
Attorney for Applicant  
Reg. No. 52,305